

REMARKS

The Office Action

Claims 1, 11 and 12 have been objected to because of minor informalities, i.e., typographical errors.

Claims 1-5, 10-15 and 17-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,954,030 to Szucs, et al.

Claim 7-9 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Szucs in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,960,353 to Thorndyke.

Claim 16 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Szucs in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,860,263 to Taylor.

Claims 5-6 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but are otherwise indicated as containing allowable subject matter.

Comments/Arguments

Claim 5 has been placed in independent format, and is now in condition for allowance, along with claim 6 depending therefrom.

Correction of the typographical errors in claims 1, 11 and 12 have been made as suggested by the Examiner.

Currently amended independent claim 1 recites that the linkage joining the first and second mandrels engages with the first and second mandrels so as to define first and second apertures, respectively, through which the tie down passes when the tie down is engaged with the first and second mandrels. Szucs fails to disclose such a linkage. Note, element 4 of Szucs (i.e., the alleged linkage) does not form or define any apertures with elements 19 or 38 (i.e., the alleged mandrels) – and more specifically, no apertures through which passes the strap 20 or 42 (i.e., presumably the alleged tie down). Accordingly, Szucs fails to expressly teach or fair suggest the claimed linkage. Claim 1, therefore, defines patentably over the cited prior art of record, along with claims 2, 4, and 7-16 depending therefrom.

Furthermore, currently amended dependent claim 10 recites that the linkage includes a movable joint arranged between the first and second mandrels. Szucs discloses no such movable joint. Claim 10 accordingly further defines patentably over the references of record.

Currently amended independent claim 17 recites "wrapping the line at least partially around a second substantially rigid mandrel at the second location on the line, said second mandrel being connected to said first mandrel by a flexible linkage." New independent claim 23 also recites a flexible linkage joining the first and second mandrels to one another. The element 4 of Szucs (i.e., the alleged linkage) is not flexible. Accordingly, claim 17 defines patentably over the reference, along with claims 18-22 that depend therefrom, and claim 23 also defines patentably over the reference.

CONCLUSION

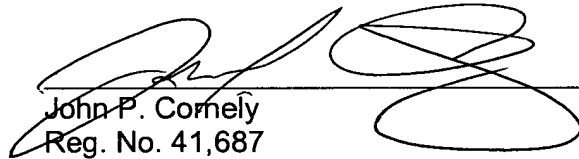
For the reasons detailed above, it is submitted that all the claims remaining in the application are now in condition for allowance.

Respectfully,

FAY, SHARPE, FAGAN,
MINNICH & McKEE, LLP

August 22, 2005

Date

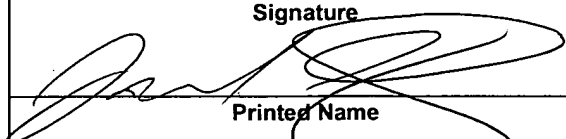

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